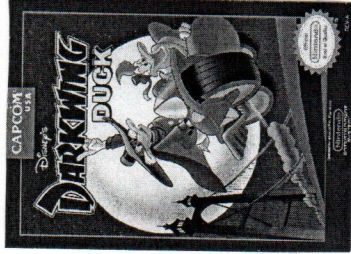


LOST GEMS

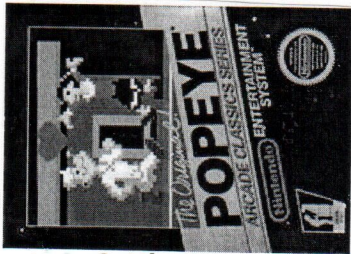
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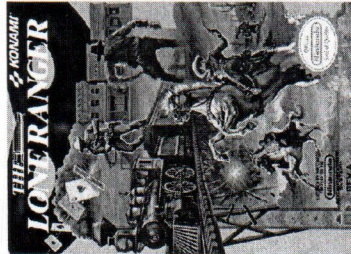
Duck Tales, and to a lesser extent Rescue Rangers. I think most of the spotlight for NES Disney games, but this Mega Man knockoff is actually very good and well-polished. It has the same graphical polish and respect for the source material. Available on Steam as part of the "Disney Afternoon Collection."



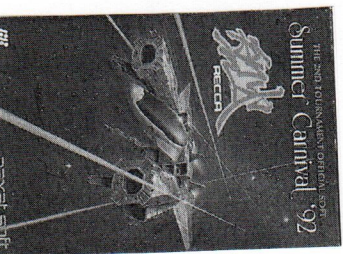
What's cooler than baseball? Well... lots of things, actually, but customizable robots with weapons certainly help. Forcing a win by blowing up most of the other team's rules. The actual baseball is solid too, though home runs are frequent. The huge, detailed robot sprites are great and the fighting is hilarious, especially when a flybot repeatedly bounces on a foe.



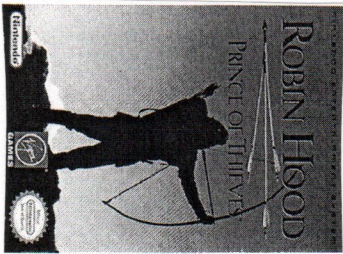
I like Popeye. I like clever single-screen arcade games. This has both. The NES version does a very good job with the port, including all three levels, and with quite good graphics for such an early game. And nothing says "It's fucking ON" like getting the Spinach and watching Bluto turn tail and run like hell, while the theme kicks in.



The President has been kidnapped by cowboys. I think our hero would object to being called a dude though. It's a platformer! An ARPG! A light gun shooter! All of the above! A lot went into this game, and it's impressive to see, even if not everything works well and it's a bit hard. I'm surprised they put this much into a character nobody's cared about since 1967... (Sorry, Armie Hammer)



I don't know what dark wizardry made a bullet hell shmup possible on the NES, but it exists. It's astoundingly fast and flickery as shit due to trying to put all of those sprites on screen at once, and it that's not enough, there's a hard mode. And if that's not enough, there's a mode that makes all exploding enemies throw bullets at you...



This should not be as good as it is, especially considering the source material. They actually made an Ultima-esque top-down ARPG, and quite a good one, with flashy fighting game-esque sword fighting bits. It could use more colors than brown, sure, but I'd say it aged better than Kevin Costner did.

Possibly my first experience with manga art style (though you wouldn't know it from the shitty cover). The game is kind of a sprawling mess, but in the best way, with lots to discover and an off-kilter vibe. (And Tom Guycot is pretty great.)